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## THE BOOK REPORT

A Closely Reasoned Study  
of Nuclear Arms Escalation

BY JOEL SIEGEL

MISSILE MADNESS by  
Herbert Scoville and Robert Os-  
born (Houghton Mifflin  
Co.: \$4.95).

Robert Oppenheimer's unpardonable sin was suggesting that our 200th nuclear bomb would be little more valuable than Russia's 20th. But reason has been deemed irrelevant and we have continued to move right on, building bigger bombs and inventing surer and faster ways to move them to their targets.

The current nuclear stockpile — ours, theirs, China's, France's and Britain's — is equal to 10 tons of TNT for every person on earth. And "overkill" has become part of the language.

## Four Requisites

Herbert Scoville, a former deputy director of the CIA and a former assistant director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, wrote "Missile Madness" last summer during the ABM hysteria. It is a smooth-flowing, well-reasoned description of the complex processes that, so far, have managed to keep heavy fingers off the buttons labeled "World, End Of." And though the book was written last summer, it serves as an excellent guide to this summer's Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in Vienna.

Scoville lists four inter-related requisites for stability between nuclear powers:

— Nations must know that their cities will be destroyed by their enemy's second strike if they decide to strike first.

— The enemy's nuclear capabilities must be understood and appreciated.

Robert Kirsch, Times book critic, is on vacation. Today's guest columnist is Joel Siegel, a reviewer for Calendar.

— All nations must have fail-safe command and control systems to eliminate the hideous possibilities of an accidental first strike.

— And the number of nations possessing a nuclear capability must be kept at a minimum as threats to stability increase geometrically.

He suggests that, at present, the United States and the Soviet Union have reached this stable plateau on the nuclear spiral and that this is the ideal time to stop moving up. If not start sliding back a little. "The United States and the Soviet Union can both be assured that their strategic forces can produce unacceptable damage to the other even after having been subjected to the maximum conceivable surprise attack."

However:

Enter ABM and MIRV. The Anti-Ballistic Missile, certainly a defensive enough sounding name, is defensive only when it is deployed to protect offensive missile sites. The enemy's first strike is aimed at offensive capability. You hit him so he can't hit back. And ABM's protecting missiles defend against a first strike.

But second strikes are aimed at cities, the only targets left (because the first strike power has used up his missiles. There is no third strike.). So ABMs deployed around population centers are offensive. You are defending your cities from the enemy's second strike which means, to the enemy, you intend to strike first.

MIRV, the acronym for Multiple Independent Reentry Vehicle, means one missile carrying a number of nuclear warheads that can be aimed at separate targets. Both ABMs and ICBMs can be MIRVed and MIRV increases the temptation to strike first.

If we MIRV our ICBMs, Russia will be hooting and hollering to knock those missiles out while they are still in the ground. First strike. (Or vice versa, if Russia MIRVs her ICBMs.)

It takes just one missile to knock out a MIRVed ICBM when it's snug in its silo. But if it carries 10 warheads, you need 10 missiles to hit them when they're flying low over Portland, Or Volgograd.

## Good Title

"Missile Madness" is a good title. It is mad. It can't be real. And artist Robert Osborn vividly illustrates the madness in perfect complement to the writer's reasoned prose.

"The only solution is arms control. The upward spiral must be cut now while a stable situation exists. Far better to prevent further construction of the Soviet SS-9 missiles through an arms control agreement than to try to destroy with an ABM system these missiles as they approach our cities.

"Far better to protect our people by controlling the size of the threat through the destruction of missiles in a disarmament bonfire than to attempt to destroy the weapons in their silos in a nuclear strike. Deterrence can be maintained with much greater certainty by agreeing to limit ABM systems than by trying to assure their penetration."

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